

Message Text

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ACTION SNM-02

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FM AMEMBASSY ANKARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4694

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DEPARTMENT FOR AMBASSADOR VANCE; GENEVA FOR BETTY GOUGH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, TU

SUBJECT: PROBABLE INCREASE IN TURKISH POPPY PRODUCTION

REF: SAMUELSON MEMORANDUM, AUGUST 20

1. WITH POPPY CAPSULE HARVESTING/BUYING WELL UNDER WAY, SOME INDICATORS OF TRENDS IN POPPY CULTIVATION ARE EMERGING. HIGH PRICE PAID FOR CAPSULES LAST YEAR BY GOT AND TL 2 INCREASE THIS YEAR, STRONG DEMAND AND GOOD PRICE FOR SEED, AND SUCCESS OF SPING PLANTING IN MANY AREAS MAKE IT APPEAR LIKELY THAT ACREAGE LICENSED THIS FALL WILL EXCEED LAST FALL'S TOTAL OF 54,000 HECTARES. (OUR MOST CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATE OF 1976 HARVEST IS 12,000 TONS OF STRAW FROM 21,000 HECTARES OF PLANTS SURVIVING AFTER NORMAL LOSSES.)

2. THERE SEEMS TO BE NO IMMEDIATE (I.E., COMING CROP YEAR) DANGER THAT PRESENT FIVE-DECARE MAXIMUM FOR EACH ELIGIBLE HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD WILL BE RAISED OR THAT SEVEN-PROVINCE GROWING REGION WILL BE EXTENDED. HOWEVER, PROFITABILITY OF POPPY PRODUCTION OVER LAST TWO YEARS IS ATTRACTING ADDITIONAL FARMERS AND IS CAUSING MANY FARMERS TO SEEK LICENSES TO

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PLANT MORE THAN ONE FIELD TO REACH FIVE-DECARE LIMIT, SOME-

THING MOST HAVE NOT RPT NOT BEEN DOING UP UNTIL NOW. AS A MEANS OF EASING ITS CONTROL PROBLEMS, SOIL PRODUCTS ORGANIZATION (TMO) HAS MANAGED UNTIL NOW TO AVOID ISSUING MULTIPLE LICENSES PER HOUSEHOLD (WHICH ARE NECESSARY IF MORE THAN ONE FIELD IS TO BE PLANTED), ALTHOUGH LAW DOES NOT SPECIFICALLY PROHIBIT THEM. IT WILL NOW HAVE DIFFICULTY IN APPLYING INFORMAL RULE OF ONE LICENSE/ONE FIELD PER HOUSEHOLD. ALTHOUGH TMO'S CONTROL RECORD HAS BEEN GOOD, WE ARE CONCERNED THAT ITS CAPABILITIES WILL BEGIN TO BE SEVERELY STRAINED IF TOTAL AREA AND NUMBER OF FIELDS ARE INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY.

3. EMBASSY IS TAKING EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS CONCERN TO TURKS ABOUT POSSIBLE OVER-PRODUCTION AND WEAKENING OF CONTROL. WE INTEND TO REINFORCE OUR ARGUMENT BY POINTING OUT THAT WORLD OPIATE SUPPLY COULD SOON EXCEED DEMAND AND THAT GOT COULD END UP HAVING TO SUBSIDIZE PRODUCTION. WE SUGGEST THAT DEPARTMENT MAY WISH TO FIND OCCASION TO RAISE SUBJECT WITH TURKISH EMBASSY WASHINGTON. MORE IMPORTANTLY (AND SUBJECT TO USMISSION GENEVA'S VIEWS), WE RECOMMEND THAT DEPARTMENT EMPHASIZE GROWING DANGER IN BOTH ECONOMIC AND ENFORCEMENT TERMS, OF OVER-PRODUCTION, AND ASK USMISSION TO DISCUSS ISSUE WITH APPROPRIATE TURKISH AND UN COLLEAGUES IN GENEVA, POINTING OUT THAT SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL UN ASSISTANCE TO GOT POPPY-CONTROL PROGRAM MAY ENCOURAGE INCREASE IN PRODUCTION BEYOND GOT'S ABILITY TO CONTROL IT.

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